

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

September 18, 2014

Commission Members Present:

H. Taylor Walls
Tim Johnson
Frank Eastham
Opel T. Jones, I
Genevieve Walker-Lightfoot
Ivette Lopez
Rev. Turner
Catherine Hyde

Commission Members Absent:

Sal Hussain

Staff:

Stephanie M. Chapple, Recording Secretary
C. Vernon Gray
Barry Sanders, HRC Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm.

2. APPROVE MINUTES

June meeting minutes were approved.

3. PUBLIC FORUM - Joanna Kai addressed the Commission. Jack Connelley, student at River Hill High School attended the meeting.

4. Chair's Report – Student Commissioner Giovanna Guarnieri will attend her 1st meeting next month. Giovanna is a junior at Reservoir High School. HRC Chair and members discussed suggestions and options where Commissioners can support and assist school leaders and officials regarding the incident at Glenelg High School.

5. HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL – HRC denied appeals of HRC Case No. 14-08-010 and 14-08-011

6. NEW COMMITTEES/ REPORTS

Finance and Fair Lending – Genevieve – Gen will circulate news articles regarding Bank of America and Country Wide home mortgage loans and its effects on home ownership, the housing industry and the economy.

Legislation – Ivette and Genevieve – Ivette searched the Maryland Legislative website, but did not find anything that the commission should be aware of.

Education & Community Outreach – Frank, Rev. Turner – The African American Roundtable will meet the last Monday in September at Wilde Lake High School at 7p.m. Dr. Hrabowski will be the guest speaker.

Law Enforcement – Opel agreed to spear-head this committee formerly held by Pat Davis.

HRC Awards Program – Genevieve – Ivette, Tim and Opel have agreed to serve as committee members. Opel will pick up the plants from Wilhide's. Stephanie will contact Wilhide's to confirm their participation again this year. Gen will work with Taylor and Tim regarding program booklet. Frank will contact student to sing the national anthem. Frank will assist with Oakland Mills ROTC. Caterer should provide light fare for program.

Human Trafficking Task Force – No report

LGBT Committee – Catherine – PFLAG will hold several program and events in October. On Oct. 20th there will be a parent forum for parents of LGBTQ children. Please visit PFLAG's website for more information on these upcoming programs. Additionally, there will be a gender family conference on Nov. 14 & 15. Catherine will send request to Dr. Gray regarding HRC's possible co-sponsorship for this conference.

Housing – Ivette and Catherine – No report.

7. STUDENT REPORT – N/A

8. STAFF REPORT/UPDATES – OHR fulfilled number of cases required by EEOC. Trafficking Task Force met this week, please see Dr. Gray's report for more information. EEOC FEPA Conference will be held in Rockville. Please call Stephanie for more information. OHR/HRC will participate in the 50+ Expo on Friday, Oct. 17th at Wilde Lake High School. OHR is interviewing 9 candidates for open Investigator's position, selection will be made soon. Two names were submitted as nominations for the positions previously held by Josh Sullivan and Pat Davis. Ilene Kessler and Bianca Chang will be confirmed upon review and approval. Taylor requested both resumes be sent to her for review. Stephanie will forward to Taylor and Gen. Dr. Gray will be inducted in the Howard County Sports Hall of Fame on Tues. Oct. 21st, 6 p.m. at Turf Valley. Please email Stephanie if you are interested in attending. Stephanie will send out email regarding Annual Holland Awards Dinner which honors those who support Community Action Council. This event will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 22nd.

9. NEW BUSINESS –

- Genevieve attended the Unity Rally regarding the incident at Glenelg High School.
- Tim shared info on SPIRIT program – a 2-day session generated by the Dept. of Justice for incidents that involve student conflict, etc.
- Superintendent Foose asked Frank to spear-head a Task Force ,which will involve Howard County government staff and non-staff, parents, student leaders, etc. to look at long-term and short-term goals for resolution and to work through difficult situations similar to the incident at Glenelg High School.
- Ivette proposed to draft a letter on behalf of the HRC to Dr. Foose to make a formal statement from the Commission regarding the incident at Glenelg High School. Commissioners are willing to lend any support needed, and will also offer SPIRIT program as an option.
- Genevieve made a motion to draft guidelines for a student ambassador program. Rev. Turner seconded the motion, all approved. Gen will prepare guidelines and objectives for the program and work with Taylor to finalize draft. Ambassador program will be submitted to the new Student Commissioner to begin her term.
- Taylor will draft formal invitation letter to new Police Chief Gardner to speak at an upcoming HRC meeting about the new administration, any changes or new initiatives for Howard County, and general Q & A.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES – N/A

II. ADJOURNMENT – The Chair adjourned meeting at 10:00 p.m.